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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

March 29, 1955

To the Faculty, Committee Members and others associated with the Graduate School:

Professor John M. Gaus of Harvard set the tone--scholarly and stimulating--for the 1955 series of the Jump-McKillop Memorial Lectures, March 2, with his discussion of public participation in Federal programs. If you missed his talk you will want to read it when the lectures are compiled into book form. Here are three quotations that indicate the scope of his lecture.

"Our central problem is one of planning the policies of a great nation, spanning a continent and composed of people of a wide range of interests and cultural heritages. By its constitution it is committed to have its policies represent not the product of a privileged few. But even the constituted law-makers cannot reach the whole scope of policy. Conditions to which their intent is to be applied are so varied and may change so rapidly that the discretion within the general clauses of the statute must be left to the executive.

"We must go beyond the formal structure to seek aid in adapting the statute and its general terms by calling upon citizens beyond the formal governmental organizations. We do this for various reasons. Among them (1) we may need the special knowledge of persons familiar with the situation affected by the act, so that it may be more wisely adapted to execution to achieving its purpose; (2) our policy and statute may be aimed at offering a service but not coercing the citizen...consultation with affected citizens help, and (3) our policy may be tentative and incomplete at points because our way is not clear.

"In my own experience with trade associations and pressure groups in industry and natural resources, I found that persons who emerged as most influential among their mates were those conveying a wider, longer, more public view, not the view of the zealots."

You may want to attend the last two lectures in this series: On March 30 James R. Wiggins, Vice-President and managing editor of the Washington Post will talk on GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC; Wallace S. Sayre, professor of Government at Columbia University will discuss THE PUBLIC SERVICE--ITS FUTURE STATUS on April 6.

The joint committees of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities and the U. S. Department of Agriculture on training for Government service will meet here on April 21 and 22. A luncheon is being planned at noon on Friday, April 22, to which Graduate School committee and

faculty members and staff are invited. Dr. John T. Caldwell, President, University of Arkansas, and chairman of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and University Committee is expected to be the speaker. More definite information on this will be provided later, but you may want to reserve this date now.

More than a thousand Federal employees in the Philadelphia area have indicated an interest in after-hours courses in a survey made recently by the Federal Personnel Council of that city. And Temple University is making arrangements to offer four courses that were of interest to the greatest number. These are: Federal Accounting Procedures; Federal Management Planning; Administration of Government Contracts; and Human Relations in Supervision.

Albert F. Crivelli, training superintendent of the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, who served as chairman of the FPC committee making the survey, reports that of the 1082 employees who wish to take courses: 7 are in the Marine Corps Depot of Supplies; 26 in the office of Supervising Inspector of Naval Material; 44 in the U. S. Naval Air Development Center; 65 in the Submarine Supply Office Navy Regional Accounts Office, and Navy Cost Inspector; 43 in the Naval Aviation Supply Depot; 58 in the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard; 57 in Shipbuilding Scheduling Activity; 40 in the Army Corps of Engineers; 56 in the Army Quartermaster Depot; 240 in the Signal Corps; 27 on the staff of the V. A. Hospital; 141 in the Veterans' Administration; 14 with the Civil Service Commission; and 136 in Internal Revenue.

How to maintain scholastic standards in an era of mass education is a question of deep concern to college administrators. President W. H. Elkins of the University of Maryland touched on some of the aspects of it at a GS faculty luncheon, March 1.

Here are some of the points he made.

Until recently only a small percentage of our population went to college. Today, it's almost a foregone conclusion that those who enter high school graduate. About half of them enter college. Present methods for screening out those who are not qualified for college work or likely to do well in it are not satisfactory. And there is a real danger the quality of the educational program will suffer if colleges grow beyond their capacities to treat students as individuals.

We have not reached the peak of this growth in demand on the educational system. So far the surge of enrollment has affected the elementary schools. Soon the academic and vocational high schools. We face the prospect of educating 75 to 100 percent more students in the next 10 to 20 years.

Tremendous problems confront the nation's colleges and universities, not only in sheer size but in getting faculty and facilities. And today our colleges and professional schools are inadequate to meet the expected growth.

Dr. Elkins believes if we are to preserve our academic standards we must begin working toward that end now. One of the main problems is to educate the public on what a university should be.

You may wish to tell your friends in the field about this. The most recent addition to the GS correspondence program is a course in "Basic Principles and Practice of Administration and Supervision. It is being developed by George A. Young, training officer in the personnel division of Agricultural Marketing Service and will be ready in September. Each of the 18 lessons relates to one or more of the basic management principles.

Our bookstore has a new group of customers. They are people from foreign countries on missions to the United States arranged by Foreign Agricultural Service. At the request of FAS officials, Miss Vera Jensen has stocked copies of the USDA Yearbooks 1940 to 1954, The 4-H Story by Franklin Reck, and Cooperative Extension Work by L. D. Kelsey and C. C. Hearne.

Great advances that influence the course of applied sciences--like agriculture or medicine--are seldom associated immediately with these sciences. Instead they come from basic or fundamental research.

That was the thesis of the third lecture in the GS series Progress in Science. The speaker was a physicist and long-time GS faculty member--Sterling B. Hendricks of the ARS Soil and Water Conservation Branch.

Among advances in physics that have influenced the course of agriculture in the past half century, Dr. Hendricks cited:

The Bjerknes' explanation of the behavior of the atmosphere that established the basis for more accurate weather forecasting.

A whole series of scientific developments beginning with J. J. Thompson's discovery of the electron and Max Planck's formulation of the quantum theory that produced the electronic industry and a wealth of apparatus for research in chemistry and agriculture. One piece of equipment--the electron microscope--has brought many important advances to agricultural science, among them a better understanding of the nature of plant and animal viruses.

Advances in physics in the conquest of flight and increased knowledge of optics that have given vast new dimensions to soil mapping.

X-ray diffraction that has made it possible to know the structure of silicates.

Turning to the future, Dr. Hendricks said the physicist now seeks to understand the sun and what happens to sunlight on the earth and the energy the sun supplies for growing plants. The chemical end of photosynthesis is now much better known than the part with which physics deals.

But the course of carbon dioxide fixation in photosynthesis was determined by using a product of the major recent advance in physics--carbon 14 produced in the atomic pile.

Scientific agriculture has turned radioactive materials to good use. Gamma radiation is being used to measure the density of soils in the field, of their water content, and the flow of bagasse in sugar mills. Beta radiation offers promise as a means of sterilizing foods against microbial action. Isotopic tracers are being widely used to study mineral nutrient utilization by plants.

"We are at the threshold of immense potential advances in biology--in an understanding of life that can not do other than benefit agriculture in such things as disease resistance and new knowledge of genetics. Physics will continue to play a significant part in these biological advances."

(Mimeographed copies of Dr. Hendricks' talk are available in the Graduate School)

Would there be interest in a course that might be called "Problem Solving", "Creative Engineering", or "Applied Imagination"? And can you suggest someone who is qualified and interested in setting up a course of this type?

At the suggestion of R. L. Webster, director of USDA's office of information, Alex F. Osborn, a New York advertising man, has sent us a copy of his book, "Applied Imagination", and the manual he has written for teachers who use the book as a text. As he points out, many colleges and universities are offering courses along this line today. Among them are M. I. T., New York University, and Columbia. We'll be glad to lend the book to any of you who care to look it over.

USIA's highest incentive award was recently presented to James A. Beales for his design of photography equipment expected to save the government \$11,000 a year in manpower and material.

The equipment is an automatic copy camera and auxiliary units which speed up the mass production of photographic negatives. Mr. Beales' contribution was recognized with a check for \$270 in addition to the commendation.

Chief of the USIA photographic laboratory for the past two years, Mr. Beales has been a member of the GS faculty since 1948. He teaches Practice of Photography.

James A. McConnell, a member of the GS General Administration Board, has been promoted from Administrator of the Commodity Stabilization Service to be Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. Mr. McConnell is a member of the Board of Trustees of Cornell University.

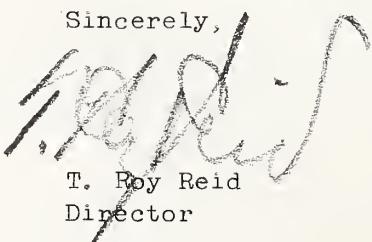
Congratulations to:

Verna C. Mohagan, instructor of Federal Personnel Procedure, for her appointment as one of five members of CSC's advisory committee on matters of concern to employees insured under the Federal Group Life Insurance Program.

Mrs. Rowena Ahern, who earned an A plus in History of Medicine while holding a job at the NIH Clinical Center and waiting the arrival of her fifth child.

Jack Luton, a GS instructor when he was in budget and finance work in USDA, is now assistant secretary for administration in the National Council of Churches. I had a nice visit with him February 14 when I went to New York for a meeting of the personnel committee of the Council.

Sincerely,



T. Roy Reid
Director